1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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613 764 769 members, may not purchase them. Thus there is a proper sacrifice, haggling is not allowed to sully the offering, and still all is not totally lost.

Several deaths may accumulate within a lineage before the collection of offerings and voyage to the river are accomplished, and within this period the local lineage may not enter into marriage alliances or carry on "field worship." It is a question of ridding the local lineage of pollution so that the members may re-enter the social life of the community. Voyages to the river are performed during several prescribed periods of the year, and members of several lineages living within a region may journey there together, especially if it is a long voyage to the Damodar.

761 The eminently social nature of death, for both the deceased and the living, and its interconnection with marriage, lineage solidarity, and social identity are recognized implicitly by the Santal. Thus their very great fear of living exclusively among non-Santal is often expressed by saying, "If we live among others, who will there be to bury us?"

613 574 Besides ritual ties, the local lineage, though by no means economically corporate, is a source of mutual aid. To deny food and lodging to members of one's local lineage, while not strictly speaking unthinkable, would be the greatest of social offenses, and if adequate food and lodging are available, something that no sane Santal would contemplate. Indeed, in the absence of shortage—and sometimes even then—to provide generous hospitality to all Santal, i.e., all "kinsmen" (*peṛa hoṛ*) in the most extended sense, is a cause for joy. Generally, when "kinsmen" visit, the man of the house will meet them and cry out to his wife that "kinsmen" have come; the wife brings water, oil (which she rubs on their tired feet), and rice beer if there is

1: Orans E-5 (1957-1958) 1965
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any, and then begins to prepare a meal. Within the local lineage these visits are frequent, especially during festivals.

Rice and money are borrowed—always without interest—within the local lineage, though there are cases in which help is denied. Occasionally members may contribute funds so that a young member may obtain an education; however, prior to this century education was extremely rare among the southern Santal, among whom missionary efforts were not nearly so intense as among the northern Santal.

Though an entire local lineage is not likely to reside in a single village, the members inevitably live near one another. Typically, the founders of a village are members of a single local lineage. Members of this founding lineage thus tend to have more and superior land than later immigrants. In most instances the chief offices of the village, i.e., "village headman" and "village priest" belong to the founding lineage. The rule of primogeniture obtains, though upon the death of any officer the villagers must accede in the choice of a new officer. To what degree the villagers may in fact determine who shall fill the position is not clear, though there are cases in which an older son of a deceased headman or priest was passed over in favor of a younger son on the basis of alleged incompetence. Although the village must give its assent in selecting leaders—and to the decisions of leaders as well, since there is nothing more than the consent of the governed to support such decisions—important control of village affairs does lie within the control of the founding local lineage through its control of offices, superior wealth, and prestige.

In the traditional system, disputes within a village are brought to the attention of the headman by the contending parties. He may suggest some compromise if it is not a question

2: Skrefsrud AW42 Santal AW42

574

/For hospitality associated with marriage ceremonies, passim, see category 116, pp. 30-40./

2; Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

the patients recover, they entertain the medicine givers. Since the time of the Santal rebellion they are not helping each other so much. However much they may have, some people are so stingy, they will absolutely not give anything, they utterly refuse to help. But no one likes such heartless people, and if they themselves fall into difficulties, no one will look at them; they rather say: Thakur is punishing this man in retribution. 476 [178]

Paddy and rice, salt and oil, money they also lend each other without any interest, but not for a long time. If they take this for a long time, we call it a debt, and in this case interest has to be paid. For paddy to be used as food 50 pct. interest, for paddy for seed 100 pct. interest, and for money 25 pct. interest has to be paid. 426

h. Working in company with others.

The Santals, men and women, very much like to work in company with others. When men go to the forest or to some hill to cut wood for a plough, a plough-beam, a yoke, rafters, firewood, posts, roof-beams, cross-beams, and so on, then they go in company. To enter a forest alone is very dangerous, and when you have companions, the work is not so strenuous. Also when going to the landlord or to a money-lender, they help each other, and at harvest time they make their threshing-floors together at the same place, in order that they may not be alone at night, and the work also goes easily in this way. Cattle-herd boys mostly herd in company, three or four of them together; by turns they drive the cattle round about, and when there is any danger, they help each other. The women also, when they go to draw water, or go to pluck vegetables and bring leaves, or when they go to a market or a shop to sell or buy, then they go in company with others. 476

i. Looking people up for a talk.

When they have no work the village people go and look each other up a good deal. The men go about on the pretext of asking for lime and tobacco; they chew the tobacco, and also talk together about their health and circumstances and so on. In the evening they come together at the Mānjhi than; they start some humorous conversation, they jest together and talk together without restraint about a thousand matters, to ease their mind. The women also visit each other on the pretext of asking for fire or something; but they mostly have their deliberations at the place where they draw water. There they tell each other their troubles and joys and anything happening in the village. But some women do not, like the men, talk what is blameless; their words may be aggravating, and therefore very noisy quarrels sometimes arise. 521 574 [578]

j. Concerning relationship.

The Santals have really two kinds of relationship, relationship by birth and relationship brought about by marriage. But besides these two kinds the Santals arrange village relationship without there being any real relationship. Some people arrange a relationship in 602

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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342 556 177 it was told, to the depredations of evil-spirits. And even brick-built houses like those of the rich land-owners of Orissa caught our attention at Tikari-para, Mayurbhanj, with surrounding walls of brick that one cannot usually associate with Santal life,[1] except in their absence of windows.

342 776 [231] Windows Santals will never have. "O, the Boṅgas," will again be the answer if you question them on the point. The Santal dog, who snarls at the chance passer-by, and is treated and fed like a member of the family, keeps an all-night vigil. If [574] you call for a Santal at mid-night, it may be he may greet you with an arrow, for he thinks that "Boṅgas" take human shapes and lure away men and women.

353 Santal walls are the beauty-spots of the hamlet. Here the inner artistic craving of the primitive tribe has displayed itself in a realm of phantasy. In some places, we saw the walls painted with a variety of colours, white, yellow, black, red and chocolate; sometimes with one colour and sometimes with alternate stripes, again with queer patches of triangles and rectangles. (See illustrations). Various pictures, associated with Santal life. sometimes greet your eyes. Here is a Brobdingnagian deity aiming a shaft at a

1 This was the house of Chandramohan Murmu of Tikaripara, Bamanghati, Mayurbhanj. Its dimensions were measured to be 50 by 20 cubits.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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drinks, and we remember how even Gandhiji in his prohibition campaign has excluded the aboriginal from his programme. "Hàṇḍia" (rice-beer) is a compulsory offering to some of their gods and spirits and on social rounds it is customary with the Santal to present pots of beer. The *modus operandi* of the preparation was thus explained to us by a comely Santal woman selling beer under a banyan tree. She said that sun-dried rice is first ground and mixed with a powdered root, called "ràṇu" in Santali (Oriya, *mulika*). The whole mass is then shaped into little balls. Next, rice is boiled and spread out to dry and the balls are then powdered and mixed thoroughly with the rice. The next stage requires the mixture thus obtained to be kept in large earthen pots, (See illustration) covered with "sal"-leaves for three or four days together, in course of which the rice is well fermented. The pots beside the woman contained this mixture and she, with a great deal of gusto, showed us how the fluid of the rice-beer trickled down a bamboo sieve (Santali, "chala"), being pressed by the hand with a handful of fibres (Santali, "pala") to complete the process. She, a

Fermented rice

3t Mukherjea O, Y-4, 6 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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sufficient respect to superiors or to show a corresponding affection to juniors, as would be proper in a common fraternity in the clan. Thus a younger man addresses an elder as 'uncle' and a younger girl will choose to call a senior woman as 'elder sister.'

iii. Between mothers

An interesting tie is knit by Santal society between the mothers of an equal number of children. Ceremonials are gone through to establish such forms of friendship, called *Sàika*, when presents are mutually exchanged and each of the friends treats some guests at feasts as a mark of the occasion.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4, 8 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
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843 *Murài arak'* (an edible leaf, the radish, *Raphanus sativus*, Linn.), and garlic. The members of the family have no particular food-prohibition during this period.

844 783 184 In the Santal Parganas, the house and village become religiously unclean. No festivals or sacrifices are held in the village nor anybody dines in the house of child-birth till after purification, three or five days after, by the *chàṭiár* ceremony.

Narta (Name-giving Ceremony)

553 184 The usual Santal custom is to observe the name-giving ceremony between the third and fifth day after birth. But in Mayurbhanj, some observe it within one year, the date being fixed by the head of the family; while there are others, who may delay it up to the tenth year.

553 574 431 On the date of the ceremony being announced, friends and relatives of the family are invited. They arrive on the day fixed, with presents of rice, cloth, *hàṇḍia* (rice-beer), necklaces of beads (*mala*) and *doṛa* (string worn round the waist, pronounced *dara* by Mayurbhanj Santals) for the new-born child. Now the midwife, who delivered the child, sits with the baby facing east, and with a leaf-cup in front, containing turmeric paste, *mohua* oil and water.

553 982 887 An old man of the village offers the rice-beer presented by others and mixed with the family

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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stock, to the chief presiding deity, *Maraṅ Buru*, and ancestor-spirits of the family, uttering suitable incantations so that the baby may prosper in life and have no diseases.

The child, if a male one, now receives his name after his grand-father; and if a female, after her grand-mother on the paternal side. Now follows a general drink of rice-beer and a tribal dinner. The midwife, who generally receives a fee of eight annas if the child is a female one, and ten annas and a *baru* (brass-plate) if a male, will now, on her part, invoke *Maraṅ Buru* and the dead ancestors of the father of the child at the village bathing-ghat, throw the leaf-cup in water, bathe and return home.[1]

Between the third and the fourth year, children of both sexes have their ears bored by their grand-mothers or elderly female relatives by means of a brass-needle. It is a quiet domestic ceremony and no invitations are issued outside.

Caco-Chatiar

The second critical period in the life of the Santal is sought to be guarded by a purificatory ritual called Caco-chatiar. This ceremony may be observed any time before marriage and is in effect, the admission

1 The midwife's fee for the next male child is 8 ans. and 6 ans. for a female.

3t Mukherjea O. Y-4, 5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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584 the locality. If they hit upon any, they will now make enquiries and if they think her a proper mate for the youth, will inform the Headman of the girl's village about the desires of the youth's father. These talks generally emanate from the bridegroom's side, the opposite party does not make the first advances. Now, if the girl's father agrees to talk over the proposal, a discussion of their clans and sub-clans and the other prohibited degrees follow, so that the marriage may not infringe the tribal laws. If these are found to be satisfactory enough, the youth's father will be informed when he may see the girl.

Omen Reading

584 787 574 Now, when the youth's father starts with a party on the day appointed, they will drop the journey and the marriage proposal, if they see a cart carrying fuel or a jackal passing from their right to left or a man carrying an axe or a *Kudi* (an implement for digging earth) or even receive the news of the death of a cow. But should they receive obituary notices of a man on reaching the girl's village, they will think the youth a lucky fellow, as on such journeys the intelligence of a man's death is the best possible omen.

584 574 [574] Now, they assemble at the house of the village Headman and after profuse salutations refresh themselves. The girl will now find herself escorted to

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the Headman's residence, where, she is closely inspected from head to foot by the youth's father and his friends. 584 574.

If the party is satisfied with the prospective bride, the Headman is privately informed, and henceforward, a go-between (*raebaric'*) is selected to continue the negotiation, and then the party will think it worthwhile to visit the house of the girl's father where they may have an opportunity to judge their future relatives closely. Similarly, the bride's party now goes to the bridegroom's house. They reach the house of the village Headman at first, who, thereafter, conducts them to the bridegroom's house where they are received. The bridegroom is rubbed with oil and turmeric paste by the bride's mother. He is also presented with bead necklaces, kissed by the prospective mother-in-law and addressed as "*baba*" (an endearing term).

Betrothal (Takacal)

The preliminaries being thus settled, another day is now fixed for the Betrothal Ceremony. When the bridegroom's party arrives, they at first go to the house of the Headman of the bride's village. Next, accompanied by the Headman they go to the house of the bride's father. The bride is presented with some ornaments by the bridegroom's mother,

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584 574 and she (bride) makes *johar* (salutation) to all superiors present.

A rupee, some sun-dried rice, "Dhubi ghans," (a common grass, *Cynodon Dactylon*, Pres; Bengali, *durba* grass) placed on a *sal*-leaf, are then held by the go-between on behalf of the bridegroom's father. Next, it is handed over to the Headman of the bride's village, after which it is inspected by the village-elders and the women (of the bride's village). Then it is presented to the bride's father by the Headman. This ceremony is called *hòròk' chinà ţakacal* (lit. to wear a sign of betrothal).

The members of the party now have a hearty drink of rice-beer, while the bride, sitting on the lap of her prospective mother-in-law, is rubbed all over with oil and turmeric paste. Next, the bride is affectionately made to wear the ornaments presented. Now, the Headman addresses both the parties with a nice little speech implying that the knot is now firmly tied between the couple and neither of them may marry elsewhere. The leaders of both the parties repeat his words as they reply "No, they cannot marry any one else."

The bridegroom's party now returns home. [583] After some time, the go-between (*raebaric'*) will again visit the house of the bride's father, sounding him as regards the sum of money it is their custom to take as bride-price, the number of cloths and

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796 horns decorated with garlands and cakes made of
[231] treacle. The young sportsmen of the village now come in a body and begin poking these animals and dance round them, all the while trying to snatch away the cakes. This "War-dance" being over,
[526] the villagers assemble at the Headman's house and engage in a picturesque competition in playing with bamboo-staff and shields.

Next follows *Hako Katkòm*, meaning the day for catching fish and crabs. It is the religious duty of all Santals to go out hunting on this day and if they cannot find anything else, they must at least kill fish or crabs.

[574] Now the ceremonials draw to a close ; and on a special day called *Jale*, the members of the tribe visit from house to house and exchange greetings.

796 A whole week of festivities comes to a close
526 with *Bejha*, (to shoot at a target) a day of sports. There is a good deal of animation in the tribe and before a vast congregation *lathi* (bamboo-staff) play, shooting at a mark with arrows and measuring individual strength take place, those successful being cheered and conveyed to the Headman's house on the shoulders of their friends.

796 *Sobrae at Mayurbhanj*

In Mayurbhanj, the *Sobrae* is generally called as *Bandhna* or *Kali Puja*, and celebrated along with

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796 the Hindu festival prevalent on the day. This
[769] is also called *Sakrant puja* and performed on an elaborate scale at Mayurbhanj, when *chira* (flattened rice) and molasses are offered to the dead ancestors.

796 On the first day, called "Banuṇḍi," people catch
262 fish and crab in the belief that if they can eat them on the day, they will be given a long lease of life. Tasteful cakes of meat, sun-dried rice-flour are prepared in all households ; and after baths, the Santals eat them with treacle and *til* (sesamum), *chira* (flattened rice) being a compulsory item. Mean-
[273] while, drinks of rice-beer go on.

796 Towards evening, the people indulge in archery
[526] competition on a target placed on a plantain tree. The successful one is cheered by the tribe and conveyed to the Headman's residence with a great demonstration, where the tribe is entertained with rice-beer and fried-rice. He, who can maintain a uniform record for three consecutive years, is awarded a special prize by the Headman, amidst tribal songs and dances.

The conclusion of the festival sees a great deal
[532] of mirth in all the houses. Puppet monkeys made of straw are made to dance from house to house.
[574] People raise subscriptions for a tribal dinner and the country-side rings with merry music and laughter of a good time.

31 Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
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the branches with the flower, while Jahèr era plucks them in his basket. Then, they all return to the holy-grove, also gathering *mohua* (Bassia Latifolia) flowers on the way, where the priest receives them with a load of *sal*-flowers in a chequered napkin. The actor-deities are then enshrined in their respective huts. Fowls are sacrificed in their honour with a special incantation in honour of Baha and amidst songs and rejoicings, the priest offers the deities bunches of *sal* and *mohua* flowers. Then, after a mutual feet-washing ceremony, in which Jahèr era takes the lead, the balance of the water is sprinkled on them. Then there are shouts and yells when the deities are transformed into their real selves.

All then return to the village singing and dancing. The burden of these particular songs is that of an invitation to all the boys and the girls of the village to accept the special gift of a *sal*-flower from the priest, and to salute him in return. At night, the priest remains at the grove with his wife, who shares with him a special dish of a spotted fowl, cooked by her husband.

The third day, which symbolises the return home, is devoted to general feasting and merry-making. Some go to the *Jabèrthan* (grove), beat the kettle-drum and blow horns, indicating that the priest is returning home. All then tell one another, "Let us go and welcome the priest," and march to

4; Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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844 cut by the midwife with an arrow by placing a coin beneath it, which is afterwards taken by the midwife. The placenta is then buried in a pit in one corner of the courtyard of the house. Immediately a birth is announced there is a gathering of friends and relations for congratulating the parents. After the birth of a child, the house and the village is considered polluted. So the Santals perform the *Janam Chatiar* ceremony, until this is done it is considered unpropituous to engage in any shikar or hunting expedition or religious ceremonies. The usual day for this ceremony is on the fifth day in the case of a male child and on the third day in the case of a female child. All the male members of the village come to the house of birth, first the village officials are shaved then all the other men present and then the father of the child. Then the midwife brings the child near the barber to cut a few locks of hair from the different parts of the head of the child, which are put in a leaf cup. The midwife then ties two threads to the arrow with which the umbilical cord was cut. All the village officials and other male members go to have their bath in a nearby streamlet. Then the midwife carries the child and together with the mother and the women of the village goes to the bathing place. There, the midwife throws the locks of hair and one of the threads in the water. After bathing they come back to the house. The midwife brings with her the second thread and the arrow, this thread is then smeared with turmeric and tied round the waist of the child.

[574] [302] 846

When the purification has been completed, the men women and children of the village who have assembled at the house receive each a leaf cup full of rice water

[574] [302]

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
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with which the leaves of Nim tree (Melia azadirachta, L) have been mixed. After this they all take a draught of their home-brewed liquor and depart.

On the fifth day the child is given its name. Should it happen to be a son and heir he takes the name of his grandfather; should he be the second son born, he takes the name of his maternal grandfather: and thus the paternal grandfather's brother for the third boy, the maternal grandfather's brother for the fourth boy and so on. The same procedure is followed for girls, the feminine relations being in the same order from the female side.

Chacho Chhatiar: It is a very important ceremony of the Santals, which enables the individual to take his place in Santal society and participate in its rights, rules and ceremonies. Without this no Santal can be married or cremated; if anybody dies without this ceremony he is buried. There is no age limit for this ceremony though it must precede marriage. Generally the Santal performs this ceremony for several children at the same time.

Mr. O'Malley has given a full description of this ceremony in the District Gazetteer[1] in the following words. "The father brews handi and provides oil and turmeric for the villagers. When the handi is ready he calls the manjhi and paranik in the morning and gives them a drink. They ask him what handi it is, and, after drinking, the headman bids the godet call the villagers together. When they have come the girls of the village anoint the naeke and his wife, who sit

[1] L.S.S.O'Malley—Bengal District Gazetters (Santal Parganas) pp. 132-133.

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salute with the right hand; this is raised towards the face, fingers slightly bent, the fingers of the left hand lightly touching the right forearm. When a Santal is meeting his co-parents-in-law, they embrace breast to breast, exchange jokes, and make use of the inclusive form of the dual pronoun. Honoured guests as well as relations are met with dignified courtesy. Few experiences can be more refreshing than to sit in the courtyard of a Santal home after a long and dusty walk. When greetings have been exchanged, one of the girls of the house comes forward to wash the feet and massage with oil the tired calves. This done, tobacco encased in the rolled leaf of the *sal* tree is offered and gratefully accepted.

Addendum to Chapter I

The following figures for the distribution of Santals have been taken from the Statistical Tables of the *Census Report of India*, 1931. Unfortunately, the figures for 1941 do not distinguish Santals from other primitive tribes, district by district.

Bihar and Orissa		*Bengal*	
Monghyr ..	26,742	Burdwan ..	101,522
Santal Parganas	754,804	Birbhum ..	64,079
Hazaribagh ..	129,103	Bankura ..	114,577
Manbhum ..	282,315	Midnapur ..	169,750
Orissa States ..	278,284	Rajshahi ..	25,591
Bhagalpur ..	30,799	Dinajpur ..	130,328
Purnea	46,905	Jalpaiguri ..	27,859
Balasore	15,444	Rangpur ..	7,410
Singhbhum ..	108,890	Malda	72,145
		Hooghly	38,013
		Murshidabad ..	22,725

(Districts from which only a few Santals were returned have been omitted above.)

In Assam, 101,949 persons were returned as Santali speakers.

The numerical and proportionate distribution of the population in the Bankura district was given as follows:

Total primitive tribes	139,063, 12% of the total
Hindus	920,456, 83% of the total

(Of the Hindus, 102,939 were Brahmin, while 353,675 were recorded as belonging to the Depressed Classes.)

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over a wide field, involving inheritance, marriages and instances of indiscipline. Members are allowed to appeal against decisions made in village councils. Punishments inflicted range from outcasting to fines, and crude punishments are sometimes exacted on the spot, as in a case of a youth who had transgressed the rules of behaviour towards a woman relative with whom he was not in a joking relationship. He was compelled to drag his nose along a line of urine provided by the village headman whose authority had been flouted. The hearing of cases continues till the small hours of the morning and the discussions appear interminable, with accusation and counter-accusation, the calling of witnesses and references to tribal law and custom. It is, however, one of the great educating and cementing institutions in the life of the tribe. It is known to them by the name of "high court", a name that has been naturalized in most Indian languages. It is also called the *sendra dupup'*, the hunt sitting, and the *lo bir dupup'*, the burnt forest sitting, the latter name being due to the fact that the hunt takes place when the undergrowth in the forest has been burnt to help the fertilizing of the soil.

Meanwhile, when the evening meal is over the young men gather in another part of the clearing and spend the night in revelry. There is much strong liquor in evidence. In some cases the place of meeting has become the site of a government liquor shop. The dances, of a class known as *doiger*, are men's dances, and the songs, known as *bir*, or forest songs, are men's songs. They are frankly coarse and deal largely with the physical aspects of love, courtship and lust. Many of the songs that are sung on this night are never sung by the Santals in any mixed company, or, indeed, at any other time, a fact that indicates among them a standard of delicacy in sexual behaviour which certain modern schools of thought appear at times to deny to primitive people.

Towards morning some of the folk, young and old, rest for an hour or two of much-needed sleep, but when the sun has risen they take some breakfast and begin to disperse. They make their way to their own villages, hunting as they go; but on this second day the proceedings are apt to be unexciting, for they do not find much to kill. By late afternoon the men are home again with their spoils, and when these have been divided they work off their fatigue in sleep.

The supposed monotony of the struggle for a livelihood is broken by so many devices of nature and of man that it is

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basket on her head; likewise *Marañ Buru* took the bow and arrows and *Mañjhi haṛam* held the axe. Just before sunset the men came to their senses, the priest gathered up all the things, and his wife carried the lucky water-pot. As before, the youths and maidens placed the priest in their midst and again the spirits came and danced with the others. Then in every house, from one end of the village street to the other, they washed the feet of the priest. He put *sarjom* flowers into the hair of the girls who washed his feet, and all the people sprinkled water on to each other. On that day we are free to sprinkle water on anyone else.[1] When we reached the priest's house he poured out two pots of beer and we all drank. Again the dancing began and went on till a late hour.

March 18. Yesterday was the full Flower festival day; today is the 'stale' day of the feast. Yesterday everyone was drunk, and again today they began to drink early. There were many visitors in the village, for we had invited daughters, sisters and sons-in-law to be with us. We had to feed them well, and we were busy with all the preparations. One prepared rice, another flour, while the men killed cocks or goats or pigs, for yesterday they had no time to feast well. Even so, in some of the houses a few people became drunk before they had time to eat. Those unfortunates had no meat either yesterday or today. Most of the time went in feasting, though there was some dancing in the village street, and the dancers sang:

> Let us gather, O elder sister, the *matkom*;
> Let us wear the *sarjom* flowers, elder sister, in our hair;
> Let us drink, O elder sister, the juice of the *matkom*.[2]

Most of the singing was done by a small band of old men and women who went into each of the houses and were given beer and *matkom* flowers by the people of the house. In our part of the village there was a fierce quarrel. Some of the men who went to stop the trouble were themselves beaten and returned very angry to their homes. Before midnight everyone was fast asleep, for all had been drinking heavily. I thought to myself, if anyone came here tonight with evil intent he could steal anything he wanted with the greatest ease; and, in fact, that is what happened. During the night someone stole from the headman's house five goats, male and female."

[1] Water "squirts" are made from bamboo and are used freely.
[2] See Appendix B, No. 18.

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58 852 been a second marriage, and as they were extremely poor their plea to set up house together had been allowed and the marriage celebration that had been postponed was indefinitely suspended. The time came when they wished to arrange a marriage for their eldest son and they found themselves involved in a difficulty. Until the formal celebration of their own marriage had taken place their son could not marry because in its absence they could not carry out the *caco chaṭiar* of their boy. The problem was solved by going through one of the permitted forms of marriage themselves, after which on the same day they performed the initiation of their three sons. They were scolded by the villagers who gathered for the occasion, but again pleaded their poverty.

852 574 The whole of the population of the village is invited for the ceremony, and each person must at the very least be given two cups of beer for each child on whose behalf the ceremony is being held. The feast for the whole village is not practicable except for a very few, and it is regarded as sufficient if the village officials are presented with a meal of rice and meat or chicken curry. If possible, the midwife who presided at the birth of the children bathes them in the courtyard by pouring water over them; and if she cannot, this is done by one of the old women present. [538] [624] Water is also sprinkled over the assembled guests. The *jog-māṇjhi* recites the myth of Santal origins; beginning from the account of the creation of the world and the founding of the clans, he brings the story up to date by leading to the birth of the children in the particular family with which the villagers are at [535] that moment concerned. Then there follows a dance in the courtyard, and songs are sung in honour of the family. The event [533] is neither preceded nor followed by any period of instruction. [184] Such materials as exist for comparing the institution in different parts of the Santal country suggest that possibly its observance is of greater importance in the north, particularly in the Santal Parganas. Bodding has described the ceremony, basing his 114 852 account on the published Santali account of the traditions.[1] Recently a long and full account of the ceremonial has been published in Santali, and this account comes from the same area but does not include a description of an actual observance.[2] On the other hand, Mr. C. L. Mukherjea's account of Santal culture to the extreme south in the state of Mayurbhanj[3] omits all

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 132]

[1] P. O. Bodding, *Santals Dictionary*, Vol. I, p. 443.
[2] Stephen H. Murmu, *Karam ar Caco Chaṭiar*, Dumka, 1943.
[3] C. L. Mukherjea, *The Santals*, Calcutta, 1943.

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584 *horok' cikhna*, the "putting on of a sign" in token of the agreement. When the bridegroom's party arrive at the home of the
584 prospective bride they are welcomed as honoured guests. String
• 584 beds are placed in the courtyard for them to sit on, their feet are washed and massaged with oil and they are served with beer. This over, they are taken into the house and given parched rice with molasses to eat. Their hands are then washed by their hosts and they are served with more beer before emerging from the house. Then the guests adjourn to bathe, and on their return they are seated on mats in the courtyard to eat a meal. This meal consists of rice and curry. Unless food consists of rice and curry it is never considered to be a full meal. While the menfolk
[302] eat, the women prepare themselves by dressing their hair; they put vermilion in their hair parting and also on both sides of the forehead, the marks going up from the outer end of the eyebrows in the shape of horns. When all have eaten and washed, the guests sit down once more and the bride-to-be is brought out by a married woman to pay her respects to the visitors. When she makes a low obeisance before the bridegroom's father he invests her with the "sign". This is either a necklace, a piece of cloth or a pair of bangles. When she bows before him she places at his feet a small brass vessel full of water, and in it he drops two rupees.

584 In the conversation that follows, all outstanding details of
583 the wedding arrangements are completed. First there has to be agreement about the bride price. This is known by two different terms, both of which are of Indo-Aryan origin. The first term, *gonoñ*, is from a root meaning to count or calculate, and the second, *pon*, is from a root meaning earnest-money or a pledge. The amount is variable, and this leads to some bargaining. Thirty years ago seven rupees used to be considered a high figure, whereas now the sum varies from eleven to twenty-one rupees. The *jogmañjhi* of the bridegroom's village asks the bride's father to declare his wishes. He does so, not in words, but by placing the correct number of cowrie shells in leaf cups, whereupon the cups are passed over to the visitors. When a small bride price is agreed upon, the bridegroom's father understands that he cannot expect any gifts at the time of the marriage and he will have to bear the expenses of his own party for new clothes. Ordinarily, however, the bride's parents present the cloth to be worn by the bridegroom during the marriage ceremony. In addition, his family are entitled to receive the present of a cow or a goat, according to circumstances. The bride's family expects, in

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585 If the distance between the two villages be great, the party of the bridegroom will have arrived on the outskirts of the bride's village on that evening and are accommodated in a special shelter for the night. They do not enter the village, but at the first sign of approaching morning the go-between comes from the bridegroom's camp, bringing with him a small quantity of the oil and turmeric left over from the bridegroom's anointing, and with this the bride is once more anointed.

585 Meanwhile the bridegroom's party make ready to approach
574 the bride's house. The *jogmaṇjhi* and *goḍet'* of the village meet
[624] them at the end of the village street, where they are asked to wait awhile. Mats are placed for them to sit on and they are given tobacco to smoke. The bridegroom's party always enter a village from the west end and leave from the east end. The officials who greet the party are accompanied by a band of young folk from the village who sing and dance and who in the course of their songs make insulting remarks about the bridegroom and the village from which he comes. These insults are expected and have to be accepted in good part. When they at length set out for the bride's house, the bridegroom is carried by a woman who lifts him and carries him on her hip as she would a child. On first arriving at the bride's home, some of her friends pretend that the bridegroom is not properly groomed, so they proceed to shave him again with a leaf for a mirror and a rough piece of wood for
[606] a razor. When he greets his future father-in-law he places a necklace round his neck while his father-in-law winds a turban cloth round his head, after which they sprinkle water over each other
[276] with a spray of mango leaves. They exchange *pan*[1] and embrace
585 each other. When the bride is brought out of the house she is carried in the same way as the bridegroom, and first of all they sprinkle sun-dried rice over each other (this is called "sowing" the rice), and follow it by sprinkling water with the sprays of mango leaves. The bride is seated in a basket and made to face the west, while the bridegroom faces towards the east. Then he takes from a small wooden box that is wrapped in his waistband the vermilion which he proceeds to place on the bride's head, and as he does so the assembled company make the air
[179] resound with shouts of "*Horibol*". This is sheer Hinduism, for it is the invocation of Hari, one of the names of Vishnu the Saviour. The bridegroom helps the bride down from the basket, places an

[1] The leaf of the *Piper betle*, i.e., rolled with lime, the nut of the areca palm and other spices wrapped inside it. Rarely eaten by Santals except on ceremonial occasions, but very generally used by others in Bengal.

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iron bangle on her wrist and iron betel nut crackers in her hand. Then they are led inside the house, where they are set down and fed on a dish of black beans and rice. The bridegroom has to make a show of refusing to eat until the bride's father presents him with a rupee.

The party outside begin to drink beer that is variously named by the different groups. The bride's fellow villagers drink beer "in honour of the guests", while the bridegroom's fellow villagers drink "in honour of the new relations"; the young people are permitted to drink "dew beer" that will help them to avoid the chill they might otherwise contract by dancing and drumming through the whole night. While a feast of goat's meat curry and rice is being prepared the guests sit around and talk and sing. The headmen of the two villages, however, have some work to complete. The presents from the bridegroom's family are handed over by their headman to the bride's headman. These are for the most part clothing. The *boiga itat'* is a cloth of twelve cubits for the sister of the bride's father. *Itat'* is a word that ordinarily means food left over on the plate of one who has eaten; perhaps it is applied to these presents in the sense that they are left over when the bride price has been given and received. The bride's mother receives a cloth of eleven cubits. The grandmothers receive cloths of ten cubits known as the *here itat'*, or husks. The bride's father may receive a cow, and her maternal uncle is given a money fee, it is said, instead of a cow. The amount given is small, usually a few annas. The headmen themselves receive a half-rupee each, the *jogmajhi* receives a loin-cloth and the *godet'* one anna, while the anointing maidens receive a half-anna each. In this way the special duties and responsibilities of various parties to the wedding are acknowledged. The bride's maternal grandmother is made to "pay" for her cloth. She does so by presenting five small measures of rice, five sticks of turmeric and five rolled cheroots to the bridegroom's headman, all being wrapped in a bundle together. The bride price that is paid at this time is also paid through the headmen. Many of the presents and fees are known by hidden names. The bride price is called the "milk tree", a term that is also used sometimes for a mother; the fee received by the headmen is known as the "tree of the sacred grove"; the cloth for the bride's mother is called "hot water".[1]

When the feasting is over the bridegroom's party gets ready to leave and the members are escorted to the end of the village street. There once more they sit down and a final beer-drinking

[1] See Chapter 4, p. 48, for other examples connected with marriage.